

School Audit Executive Summary

Iroquois Middle School

10/15/2006 – 10/20/2006

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Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a scholastic audit of Iroquois Middle School during the period of 10/15/2006 - 10/20/2006. This school's last combined accountability index was 55.1 and its classification was Assistance Level 3. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the audit.

School Deficiencies and Next Steps

1. Deficiency	School leadership has not ensured that the school council is a fully functioning decision-making body with required membership, required and needed policies, and established procedures to implement and monitor those policies.
Next Steps	The school, district and Kentucky Department of Education leadership should develop and include in the school and district improvement plans a comprehensive set of action steps for improving the leadership function in the school. These steps should include activities to allow both school and district staff to identify the needs of school leadership, to develop and deliver training beyond that required by statute as needed, to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of leadership activities and to adjust as needed. It should provide for an interactive and collaborative relationship between the school leadership and appropriate district staff that occurs in a proactive fashion. School leadership should monitor to determine whether its policies are understood and effectively implemented and to ensure timely and effective communication with its stakeholders.
Current Status of Progress	Deficiency # 1 has been partially implemented. Currently, Iroquois Middle School does not have a SBDM council. Based upon the recommendations from the district's audit, the school based decision making council was removed and legal authority was transferred to the school superintendent. The comprehensive district improvement plan (CDIP) has a detailed plan for intentional collaboration between the school and district to help Southern and Iroquois plan for the new council to begin its work effectively in the 2008-2009 school year. These plans have not been fully implemented and monitored to ensure a strong foundation for

	<p>the new council as well as smooth transition for the students.</p> <p>The district leadership has not fully identified the needs of school leadership to develop and deliver training to address those identified leadership needs. The school, district, and Kentucky Department of Education have not revisited these recommendations with the new superintendent to establish expectations and fully implement these action steps for improving leadership at the school. The superintendent, through the priority managers, should monitor the implementation and effectiveness of leadership activities and adjust as needed.</p>
2. Deficiency	School leadership has not demonstrated sustained efforts to implement a viable plan to address the recommendations from the 2004 Scholastic Audit.
Next Steps	<p>School leadership should thoroughly examine all facets of the 2006 Scholastic Audit report and share that report with all stakeholders. With the highly skilled educator's assistance, the principal and the administrative team should lead the school in an intensive analysis of the report, discuss the findings, consider and prioritize recommendations, and incorporate these priorities in the revision of the 2006-2007 comprehensive school improvement plan. Stakeholders should acknowledge the audit report as a guiding force to improve the school. They should consider all resources and assistance available from the district, community and Kentucky Department of Education as they develop action steps and strategies to achieve the goals of the plan and address the recommendations from the audit. School leadership and staff should embrace the opportunity to work collaboratively with the district, community and state to make decisions that are best for students and will give all students the chances that they need to be successful.</p>
Current Status of Progress	<p>Deficiency # 2 has been partially implemented.</p> <p>School leadership briefly shared the 2006-2007 Scholastic Audit findings with the teaching staff during a faculty meeting. There was no intensive analysis of the report and the recommendations were not prioritized in a collaborative manner.</p> <p>Some findings from the audit were incorporated into the 2006-2007 continuous school improvement plan (CSIP). Most findings and recommendations were reviewed and incorporated into the revision of the 2007-2008 CSIP. The audit report should be the guide for improvement efforts and planning.</p>

3. Deficiency	School leadership does not foster a belief that adults in the building can positively reshape the school culture and increase student achievement.
Next Steps	All school staff should acknowledge ownership for the success and failure of students. School leadership should enlist the support of all stakeholders to identify and remove barriers. School leadership should intentionally direct the staff's focus toward the acknowledgement of ownership for the success and failure of all students.
Current Status of Progress	Deficiency # 3 has been partially implemented. Local, district, and state staff continue to report that school leadership has not adequately enlisted the support all stakeholders. Focus on student achievement remains inconsistent. Leadership does not effectively create collaborative and positive relationships with staff and students. High academic expectations for all students do not always guide instructional decisions and practices. District leadership should effectively hold school leadership accountable for the success and failure of the students at Iroquois Middle School.
4. Deficiency	School leadership has not created structures and processes that fully implement a curriculum aligned to Kentucky standards and delivered using effective instructional practices.
Next Steps	School leadership should ensure that all students have access to a common core curriculum aligned to Kentucky standards. School leadership should ensure teachers use a variety of instructional practices to address various learning styles and embed higher-order thinking, rigorous assessments and problem solving skills into classroom instruction.
Current Status of Progress	Deficiency # 4 is partially implemented. Through professional development, all teachers have been provided with the essential curriculum documents and have been shown how to incorporate the curriculum into the design of instruction. However, due to behavior management issues, in some classes, all students are not always given the opportunity to receive a fully aligned curriculum. In addition, all students are not receiving instruction that adequately addresses various learning styles. Professional development and modeling have been provided to educate teachers on how to vary their instructional practices. Monitoring and feedback should be on-going.

5. Deficiency	School leadership has not developed a set of appropriate vision, mission and belief statements that anchor and guide the efforts of all stakeholders to do what is best to nurture, educate and prepare the students to become self-sufficient adults.
Next Steps	School leadership should begin immediately to involve all stakeholders in revision of vision, mission and belief statements. There should be meaningful connections between the school's mission and identified needs of all students. Adoption of a statement that is measurable, attainable and relevant will make the implementation process more acceptable. Vision, mission and belief statements should anchor the school, its culture and academic and non-academic programs to develop students to their greatest potential. The mission statement should be referenced at all meetings and included on all documents, letterhead and any and all school related articles as benchmarks for attaining the vision.
Current Status of Progress	Deficiency # 5 has not been addressed. According to school leadership, the school's vision and mission will not be addressed for revision until the school is reconfigured to an all female school in 2008. Therefore, the mission statement is not adequately used for attaining the vision and does not anchor and guide decision making. Guiding mission, vision, beliefs statements are imperative to clarify priorities, sharpen focus, give direction for the new school.

Conclusion

On-going efficient monitoring and feedback from leadership is needed to ensure the aligned curriculum is fully and effectively implemented so that all students will learn at high levels.

Many findings and recommendations from the audit report have recently been incorporated into the revision of the 2007-2008 continuous school improvement plan (CSIP). The CSIP and audit report should continue to be the guide for improvement efforts. The CSIP should be fully monitored by leadership to determine impact on student achievement and needed adjustments.

The district superintendent is currently responsible for the governance of Iroquois Middle School. The district leadership should fully identify the growth needs of school leadership and address those identified leadership needs to ensure students are receiving high quality instruction. District and school leadership should ensure stakeholder involvement in decision making and that professional positive relationships are built with staff and students. District leadership should hold school leadership accountable for the success and failure of the students at Iroquois Middle School.

Clarity of purpose of the school is critical to ensure high quality teaching and learning. Leadership should address vision, mission, and beliefs to establish focus and give direction for the new school.

Based upon student progress to date, the vast majority of students enrolled at Iroquois Middle School will leave this school unprepared to succeed at the high school level. The superintendent, through the priority managers, should monitor the implementation and effectiveness of leadership activities and should move quickly to action to adjust as needed.